

Listing of Claims

1. - 19 . (cancelled)

1 20. (new) A screen assembly for a shale shaker for treating drilling fluid with
2 solids therein, the shale shaker having a basket for holding a screen assembly, a
3 vibratory device for vibrating the basket and the screen assembly, and a lower
4 receptacle for receiving drilling fluid passing through the screen assembly, the screen
5 assembly comprising

6 at least two screening members, each screening member having
7 a surface area, the screen assembly having a top,

8 the at least two screening members connected by sewing material,
9 the screen assembly mountable on the basket so that solids
10 separated from the drilling fluid are moved off the top of the screen assembly
11 by motion imparted to the screen assembly by the vibratory device,

12 the sewing material comprising thread in a stitch pattern across the
13 at least two screening members,

14 a pattern of expandable material on and corresponding to the stitch
15 pattern, and

16 the thread passing through holes in the pattern of expandable
17 material, the expandable material expanded within the holes following
18 extraction of a needle therefrom, the needle used to apply the sewing material,
19 to inhibit tearing of either of the at least two screening members between
20 holes.

1 21. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein the sewing material
2 extends across substantially all of the surface area of the at least two screening
3 members.

1 22. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein

2 the at least two screening members comprise a plurality of layers
3 of screening material.

1 23. (new) The screen assembly of claim 22 wherein

2 the plurality of layers of screening material include at least a first
3 fine screen layer and a second coarse screen layer.

1 24. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein the sewing material
2 comprises thread.

1 25. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein the sewing material
2 comprises a pattern of spaced-apart stitches over substantially all surface area of the
3 at least two screening members.

1 26. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein one of the at least two
2 screening members is a perforated plate.

1 27. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein the at least two screening
2 members includes at least one three-dimensional screening member.

1 28. (new) The screen assembly of claim 27 wherein the at least one three-
2 dimensional screening member is made of screening material.

1 29. (new) The screen assembly of claim 28 wherein the screening material
2 comprises a plurality of layers of screening material.

1 30. (new) The screen assembly of claim 29 further comprising
2 one of the at least two screening members comprising a base, and
3 the plurality of layers of screening material connected to the base.

1 31. (new) The screen assembly of claim 30 wherein the base is a perforated
2 plate.

1 32. (new) The screen assembly of claim 31 wherein
2 the plurality of layers of screening material are connected to the
3 base with sewing material.

1 33. (new) The screen assembly of claim 30 wherein the base is a layer of
2 coarse mesh.

1 34. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 wherein
2 the at least two screening members comprise at least two layers
3 of screening material and a perforated base, the at least two layers of screening
4 material sewn together to form a combined screen, the combined screen sewn
5 to the perforated base.

1 35. (new) The screen assembly of claim 20 further comprising multiple stitches
2 of sewing material adjacent each other in areas of increased wear of the screen
3 assembly.

4 36. (new) A method for making a screen assembly for a shale shaker, the shale
5 shaker having a basket for holding a screen assembly, a vibratory device for vibrating
6 the basket and the screen assembly, and a lower receptacle for receiving drilling fluid
7 passing through the screen assembly, the screen assembly mountable on the basket
8 so that solids separated from the drilling fluid are moved off the top of the screen
9 assembly by motion imparted to the screen assembly by the vibratory device, the
10 method comprising

11 placing at least two screening members adjacent each other, each
12 of the at least two screening members suitable for screening the drilling fluid,
13 sewing together the at least two screening members with sewing
14 material,

15 the sewing material comprising thread in a stitch pattern across the
16 at least two screening members,

17 a pattern of expandable material on and corresponding to the stitch
18 pattern, and

19 the thread passing through holes in the pattern of expandable
20 material, the expandable material expanded within the holes following
21 extraction of a needle therefrom, the needle used to apply the sewing material,
22 to inhibit tearing of either of the at least two screening members between
23 holes.

1 37. (new) A screen assembly for a shale shaker for treating drilling fluid with
2 solids therein, the shale shaker having a basket for holding a screen assembly, a
3 vibratory device for vibrating the basket and the screen assembly, and a lower
4 receptacle for receiving drilling fluid passing through the screen assembly, the screen
5 assembly comprising

6 at least two screening members, each screening member having
7 a surface area, the screen assembly having a top,

8 the at least two screening members connected by sewing material,
9 the screen assembly mountable on the basket so that solids
10 separated from the drilling fluid are moved off the top of the screen assembly
11 by motion imparted to the screen assembly by the vibratory device,
12 the sewing material comprising thread extending through openings
13 in the at least two screening members,
14 expandable material on and corresponding to the openings, and
15 the thread passing through holes in the expandable material, the
16 expandable material expanded within the holes following extraction of a needle
17 therefrom, the needle used to apply the sewing material, to inhibit tearing of
18 either of the at least two screening members between holes.